

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MAPUTO 00741 152130Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----084817 152138Z /15
O 151330Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7096
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MAPUTO 0741

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS

FROM LOW

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK, US
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: PROPOSED LOW LEVEL ALL PARTIES MEETING

REF: GRAHAM AND GRAHAM/LOW MESSAGES OF 14 JUNE SENT THROUGH
UK CHANNELS TO LONDON.

1. FOLLOWING ARE SOME THOUGHTS ON THE MEETING PROPOSED
BY DAVID SMITH AND THE DEPUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TO
GRAHAM AND ME ON 14 JUNE.

2. THE PROPOSAL APPEARS TO HAVE COME ENTIRELY FROM

DAVID (AND IAN) SMITH. GAYLORD WAS VERY POSSIBLY IN ON IT
SINCE HE TALKED IN TERMS OF A MEEETING ON THE LEVEL
OF "OFFICIALS" WITH US LAST FRIDAY. THOUGH NEITHER
GRAHAM NOR I BELIEVE HE FEELS POSITIVE ABOUT IT. WE
BELIEVE IT WAS SPRUNG ON THE AFRICAN MEMBERS WHO WOULD
NOT OTHERWISE HAVE AGREED TO GO ALONG. THE "LOW LEVEL"
AND SECRET NATURE OF THE MEETING ARE EFFORTS BY THE
POLITICIANS WHO ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED THAT POLITICAL
CONFIDENCE IN THEM WILL BE UNDERMINED BY AGREEING TO
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ATTEND A CONFERENCE WHICH BY IMPLICATION THROWS INTO
QUESTION THE CREDIBILITY OF THE 3 MARCH AGREEMENT.

3. WHILE DAVID SMITH TOLD GRAHAM THAT HE WAS CONCERNED
OVER THE DEVELOPING SITUATION AND HIS SUGGESTION MAY
HAVE BEEN A GENUINE EFFORT TO TRY TO COME TO GRIPS
WITH IT. THERE MAY HAVE BEEN OTHER PURPOSES TOO. THE

SALISBURY GROUP IS CHIEFLY CONCERNED WITH RECOGNIZATION AND RESPECTABILITY AND GRAHAM AND I HAVE PLAYED ON THIS IN URGING ATTENDANCE AT ALL PARTIES MEETING. IF THEY AGREE TO GO TO A LOW LEVEL AND SECRET CONFERENCE WHICH THEN BREAKS DOWN, THEY CAN RELIEVE SOME OF OUR PRESSURE ON THEM TO ATTEND A MEETING AND, BY PUBLICIZING THE BREAK LOOK MORE REASONABLE TO THE REST OF THE WORLD. THIS MIGHT HELP THEM GET ACCEPTABILITY FOR THEIR ELECTION EVEN IF THE TURNOUT IS NOT LARGE.

4. THERE WILL BE SERIOUS PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN SETTING UP THIS MEETING. BOTH THE RHODESIANS AND THE PF WILL MAKE AN ISSUE OVER THE NUMBERS INVOLVED (PF WILL INSIST ON, AND RHODESIANS RESIST, EQUALITY) AND AGENDA (PF WILL WANT TO DISCUSS "MILITARY AND RELATED MATTERS", THE RHODESIANS THE CONSTITUTION). MORE DIFFICULT WILL BE TO GET THE PF TO AGREE TO A SECRET LOW LEVEL MEETING PARTICULARLY THE LATTER. NKOMO WILL SCOFF AND RAIL, HE WILL SAY THAT NOTHING CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED BELOW THE POLITICAL LEVEL. WHO DO EITHER OF THE PF LEADERS HAVE TO SEND BELOW THEMSELVES. BUT HE HAS AGREED TO ATTEND AN ALL PARTIES CONFERENCE AND HE WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY REFUSING PARTICULARLY BECAUSE THE FRONT LINE (KAUNDA) HAS ALL ALONG SUPPORTED "COMMITTEE" TYPE DISCUSSIONS AND AGREES THAT A FULL SCALE MEETING SHOULD BE PREPARED.
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5. THE GREATEST PROBLEM IS HOW TO MAKE THE CONFERENCE WORK. HOW CAN LOWER LEVEL POLITICALS AND OFFICIALS GET BEYOND REHEARSING THEIR POSITIONS TO EACH OTHER? AS GAYLORD HIMSELF SAID THE BEST MEETING POSSIBLE WOULD BE TO GET THE FOUR (OR FIVE) AFRICAN PARTY LEADERS (AND SMITH?) IN A ROOM WITH NO ONE ELSE THERE AND NOT LET THEM OUT UNTIL THEY HAD COME TO AN AGREEMENT. EACH SIDE APPROACHES THE MEETING FROM ITS OWN PLAN WHICH IT INSISTS SHOULD BE THE BASIS OF DISCUSSION. IT IS POSSIBLE TO LAY THEM TOGETHER SIDE BY SIDE AND COMPARE THEM POINTING OUT SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES. BUT GETTING EITHER SIDE--AT THIS LEVEL-- TO DISCUSS SOMETHING OTHER THAN ITS OWN PLAN WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT. A MEETING OF ALL PARTIES AT THE LEVEL OF PRINCIPALS IS DESIRABLE BECAUSE WE CAN BRING STRONG POLITICAL PRESSURE ON THEM FROM THE OUTSIDE USING SECRETARY VANCE, DR. OWEN, THE FRONT LINE PRESIDENTS EVEN PERHAPS VORSTER. BUT AT THE LOWER LEVELS THE LINES GO TO THE PRINCIPALS BACK HOME AND INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES ARE LESS EFFECTIVE.

6. IF NKOMO AND MUGABE THEMSELVES DECIDED TO GO, WE

WONDER WHETHER WE COULD GET THE SALISBURY GROUP TO
RAISE ITS LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION. IN OUR VIEW
DAVID SMITH WOULD BE MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE AND POSITIVE
A REPRESENTATION THAN JACK GAYLORD.

7. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT WE SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF
THIS OPENING. THE PROBLEM IS HOW TO DO IT TO BEST
ADVANTAGE. IN PARTICULAR IS HOW WE GET BEYOND THE
FIRST MEETING. ON THE ONE HAND A MEETING OR CONFERENCE
AT THE PRINCIPALS LEVEL WHICH IS NOT CAREFULLY PREPARED
IS NOT LIKELY TO SUCCEED. ON THE OTHER HAND A MEETING
TO PREPARE THE CONFERENCE ON TOO LOW A LEVEL MAY NOT
GET VERY FAR AND COULD SPOIL THE CHANCES OF A LATER
CONFERENCE OF PRINCIPALS. THUS I AM LED TO BELIEVE
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THAT SMITH'S SUGGESTION NEEDS SETTLEMENT. SECRECY, IF
IT CAN MAINTAIN, IS PROBABLY USEFUL. BUT WE SHOULD
TRY TO RAISE THE LEVEL OF REPRESENTATION, THOUGH THAT
WILL MAKE SECRECY HARDER TO PRESERVE, AND THIS WILL BE
RESISTED IN SALISBURY.

8. ANY COMMENTS DEPARTMENT MAY HAVE SHOULD BE
TRANSMITTED TO ME IN DAR (JUNE 16) OR LUSAKA JUNE 17-19)
DE PREE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, MEETINGS, POLITICAL SITUATION, CAT-B
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MAPUTO00741
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P850103-2586
Format: TEL
From: MAPUTO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780656/aaaabwhj.tel
Line Count: 145
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ad966088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2340674
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RHODESIA: PROPOSED LOW LEVEL ALL PARTIES MEETING
TAGS: PDEV, RH, ZI, UK, US, (SMITH, DAVID)
To: STATE SS
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ad966088-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014